

which could not be mistaken in the deep soil, the latter followed it across the field to an old *Umra* tree, near my tent, where he discovered the snake lying, coiled up, amongst the roots. On hearing him call out "Samp" I rushed out with a gun and killed the reptile. On drawing it out and measuring it, it turned out to be a *Daboia* no less than 5'-4½" in length.

I have killed a good many of these snakes at different times, but this one was by far the largest I have ever come across.

On examining the mango tree under which my man had been sleeping I discovered a hole in it at the very base of the trunk, for which the snake had evidently been making when its path was blocked, for a few days later the same man saw another snake—probably the mate—peeping out of the same hole. Unfortunately I arrived too late to despatch it, too.

In the Dantra district the *Daboia* is known as the "Khāḍ chitra"—"Khad" being the Guzerati for grass and "chitra" may stand (?) for "cheetah," the ordinary term (with "*dipdo*"—"the spotted one") in these parts for the panther, but of this I am not quite sure. In the *Konkani* districts of Sāvānt Vādi, where a large number of deaths are annually put down to the bite of this snake, it is known as the "*Ghōnas*." I find the same name is applied here in Kashmir to a snake which the natives tell me is very venomous. This cannot, I think, also be the *Daboia* of India, but so far I have not seen a specimen although the snake is said to be fairly common.

L. L. FENTON, LIEUT.-COLONEL, I.A.

KASHMIR, September 1904.

The specimen above recorded by Colonel Fenton was undoubtedly a very large one, but in this Journal, Vol. VIII (page 565), Mr. F. G. Brook-Fox stated that he had killed two which measured 5'-6" each. The largest specimen in our collection was obtained by Mr. J. C. Anderson, at Hurda, C. P. and measured 5'-2".

According to the standard authority, *Fauna of British India Reptiles*, by G. A. Boulenger, the *Daboia* (*Vipera russellii*) is found in Kashmir up to 6,000 feet.

EDITOR.

NO. XXII.—A COBRA FEEDING ON EGGS.

A cobra attacked, at 10 a.m. the other day, the nest of a Guinea-fowl sitting in my compound, and as none of the servants would kill it my wife sent for me. I arrived about 40 minutes afterwards, and found the cobra coiled up within 24 inches of the nest and the Guinea-fowl still sitting. I shot the cobra and pressed two eggs out of the dead body, one of these eggs hatching. The curious thing was that the Guinea-fowl was still sitting on her nest within a couple of feet of the cobra after it had taken two eggs and that one of the eggs should have hatched after having been inside the snake for from 30 to 40 minutes.

C. P. GEORGE,

SECUNDERABAD, 13th September 1904.